

James Phillips

James “Jay” Phillips serves as Executive Director and Board President of Seed Sower Inc., a nonprofit organization in southern West Virginia focused on helping adults rebuild their lives and sustain long-term recovery from substance use disorder. A native of Louisiana, Phillips moved to West Virginia in 2006 after he was honorably discharged from the US Army in 2005.

Under Phillips’ leadership, Seed Sower grew from a one-person operation with a single recovery residence for women to an organization employing 35 people and operating four residential locations across southern West Virginia, including Seed Sower Manor for pregnant and parenting women. Since 2021, Seed Sower has expanded services into a function recovery ecosystem dedicated to addressing some of the most significant barriers people face across the recovery continuum. This broader ecosystem includes Seed Sower Transport, providing transportation in support of recovery; The Well, a Recovery Community Organization (RCO) offering community connection; and the Mobile Recovery Support Team, meeting people where they are, building relationships, and connecting them with resources. Phillips has also built dozens of strong community partnerships for Seed Sower, including WorkForce West Virginia, which provides employment opportunities through its Transitional Jobs Program, and Fruits of Labor, whose nationally recognized culinary and agricultural training can now earn participants college credit through WVU Potomac State College.

Recognizing a significant gap in services for the recovery community, Phillips has led the development of Seed Sower Behavioral Health, which is poised to launch at The Well in late 2026. Rooted in compassion, connection, and a whole-person approach, the new service offering outpatient and intensive outpatient behavioral health services recognizes the close relationship between behavioral health, housing stability, access to care, and strong relationships—all vital to healing and lasting change.

Phillips’ leadership extends beyond Seed Sower. He serves on the boards of the West Virginia Alliance of Recovery Residences and the Region I Workforce Development Board and has contributed to statewide initiatives focused on public education and recovery housing. He is also a founding member and Co-Chair of RE-PATH, a statewide advocacy movement led by people in recovery and focused on amplifying lived experience, strengthening collaboration, reducing stigma and advancing systems change.

Before founding Seed Sower, Phillips served for 10 years in the U.S. Army as a Russian linguist and signals intelligence specialist and worked as an inspector, escort and interpreter within the Chemical and Biological Division of the Defense Threat Reduction Agency. His civilian career included positions with the U.S. Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs and service as a senior financial management analyst with the Internal Revenue Service. He holds an MBA from West Virginia University.

Phillips lives in Beckley, West Virginia, with his wife, Paige. He has three grown sons – Sam, Caeden, and Cooper, who also live and work in the Mountain State.